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THE SEA-SIDE RESORTS OF THE LONDONERS.

With the close of the season, the House at length 'up,' the Operas silent, the West End grim with shuttered windows, the fashionable shops deserted, and the aristocratic equipages vanished from Bond Street, Regent Street, and the Park; at the time of the annual hurry-scurry of the upper classes of society over the continent—intent, some upon scenery, some upon art, some upon music, but the greater number led abroad by the mere excitement of travel and novelty—a more humble emigration takes place to more unpretending localities, of the shopkeeping and general *bourgeois* class of London. The great majority stick steadily to their old sea-side resorts; year after year they have packed up their trunks, and carpet-bags, and handboxes, and calling a cab on a sunny August morning, have loaded it to extremity inside and out, and joined the long *queue* of similarly burdened vehicles defiling through the narrow streets which lead to the steam-boat wharfs near London Bridge. Presently they are plunged into an agony of terror at missing the boat, as a vast wagon with six horses defiles out of a narrow alley that seems hardly wide enough to admit the transit of a wheel-barrow, and utterly and hopelessly blocks the way. Instantly the cab is surrounded by a swarm of dirty porters: 'Margate boat, sir?' 'Herne Bay boat, sir?' 'Gravesend boat, sir?' 'All go at nine, sir.' 'Five minutes bell ringing, sir.' 'You can't get past the wagon, sir.' 'Better walk, sir.' 'We'll take the luggage, sir.' 'Which boat, sir?' and an infinity of other offers—all, be it observed, made at once, and in a perfect chaos of gabble. The result is, that the unfortunate family are captured, their goods ruthlessly laid hold of, each article by a separate porter, and they themselves hurried tumultuously along, perfectly at the mercy of their conquerors, down ladders, over planks, made to clamber across piles of luggage, and take jumps—hard work for the *pater* and the *mater familias*—from paddle-box to paddle-box, while the juvenile branches are roped recklessly across, until at length, bewildered and breathless, they find themselves on the crowded deck of the *Herne* or the *Red Rover*. Lucky are they if all the members of the household circle have rendezvoused on the same boat, or the right boat; and still more favoured of the blind goddess if all the thirteen packages turn up, carried by thirteen porters, who demand thirteen shillings, and generally get them.

But time is up. The captain is swearing like the whole army in Flanders, on the bridge above the engine. There are two men at the wheel. The order

to cast off has been given. Great hawsers are piled on deck by brawny arms; the steam keeps up an incessant howl; the paddles begin to move, first 'a turn ahead,' and then 'a turn astarn,' until gradually the boat is worked out of the squadron of starting and arriving steam-craft; and ploughing her way at cautious speed down the Pool, Greenwich is passed, the dreary Essex marshes are left behind, the hulks and anchors at Woolwich are duly noted, and presently we admire the sweetly-wooded nook of Erith, with its pretty little church and quiet church-yard—concerning which, by the way, there is a stupid sort of joke often passed on green hands, to the effect that nobody is ever buried in Erith church-yard except blind people, a fact which I have more than once heard gravely asked the reason of. Steaming on amid dismal wastes of marshes, particularly on the Essex side, the low line is broken by the powder-magazine of Purfleet, regarding which the emigrants to Kent speculate as to what would become of them should it blow up; or perhaps one man will point out to a listening group the white cliffs rising above the hotel, whence a gentleman, who had been crossed in love, leaped at full gallop on a gallant charger—man and horse being dashed to pieces together. But here comes Greenhithe, on the Kent shore—a pleasant spot; and sweeping round a bend in the broad muddy river, we 'open' the steeples and pillared piers of Gravesend—famous for shrimps and water-cresses; for Windmill Hill, from whence, they say, you can see Windsor Castle on one hand, and the masts of the men-of-war in the Medway on the other; and for the Rosherville Gardens—a sort of suburban Switzerland with chalets; mountain-ravines twenty or thirty feet deep; and peaks of chalk cliff as high, on the top of which, to aid the Alpine illusion, are chained eagles sitting on artificial pines. Observe, on the opposite side of the river, bastions, ravelines, a glacis, half-a-dozen cannons without carriages, as many sentinels, and a big flag-staff: Tilbury Fort, ladies and gentlemen, immortal from its associations with the Armada, Queen Elizabeth, Lord Burleigh, with his shake of the head, Don Whiskerandos, and the gentle Tilburnia. And now more uninteresting, steaming between low, sandy, and marshy banks—the numerous little Saxon churches on the Essex side alone breaking the monotony. But the river is rapidly widening, the Essex shore is beginning to trend off to the north; people with sharp eyes discover the Nore Light, a red boat with a single mast. On the right opens up the entrance to the Medway, with its vast men-of-war, their huge hulks supporting their towering spars; while on the left the pier of Southend stretches out an unconscionable distance into the sea.

Southend may be easily described. It is a quiet place for quiet people, consisting of one long strip of houses—a strange jumble of old mansions, cottages, shops, tarry boat-houses and boat-building sheds, fishermen's dwellings hung over with nets, and public-houses where they sell you the best ale in Essex. Southend is blessed with a beach as flat as a billiard-table, which has necessitated a wooden jetty absolutely one mile and a third long—a dreary pilgrimage on slippery boards. However, when the wind blows fair, they bring out a truck with a sail, which carries luggage, and sometimes passengers, gaily up and down the wooden tram-way. The amusements of Southend are primitive. You put on yellow shoes, subscribe to the library, sail round the Nore, fish off the pier and catch nothing, if not a stray crab or a contemptible dab, and stare through a telescope at passing ships. It is a good plan to make acquaintance with the Southend boatmen. They are daring fellows; and as there is a dangerous labyrinth of sands 'convenient,' as the Irish say, to their homes, they generally make a good harvest out of a tolerable stormy winter. These boatmen will tell you all manner of strange sea-stories; but, to say the truth, they bear a bad reputation along the coast, having the character of attending far more to the acquisition of salvage than the preservation of life; and there are rival adventurers on the deep who do not scruple to call them wreckers. Leaving quiet, dull Southend, however, with its half-dozen bathing-machines, and its two dozen or so of bathers, we are indulged with a ride in the truck, and presently find ourselves at the end of the pier of Herne Bay, on the Kentish coast, where another sailing-machine awaits us. The Herne Bay pier is about half the length of that which we have left, and a much more important structure, having been built by Mr Telford.

Herne Bay is not a much more lively place than Southend; but Southend, in a quiet way, is a prosperous spot with a trade. Herne Bay, on the contrary, is the beginning of a city, the building of which was suddenly stopped by a caprice of the founder—a lady, who is the proprietrix of all the surrounding country. From that unfortunate day, the Bay languished and drooped. Many of the great white houses which stare with a doleful look of ruin on the spectator are unfinished, and others are uninhabited. There is, however, a populated patch of an ancient village—the nucleus of the city which was to be, and two or three streets, in which 'Apartments' gleam forth from below every parlour blind. Southend is a cheap place, and it possesses good omnibus communication with a number of adjacent towns, particularly Canterbury, with its noble cathedral. It therefore boasts of a quiet population of families who wish to be salt-watered in an economical way; and it has also its bazaar and its emporium, for the benefit principally of the masters and misses, to buy wooden spades to dig in the sand, spotted horses on wheels, drums, dolls, and Jacks-in-the-box. Berlin-wool and crochet patterns, with Guides to Herne Bay, pictures of the pier, the last number of the *Newcomes*, and the first volume of *Fashionable Life by a Fashionable Lady*, 3 vols., Newby—form the staple entertainment of the ladies, young and old. On Saturday night, the London boat brings down an assortment of fathers, and brothers, and sons, from shops and counting-houses, with parcels of groceries and hampers of provisions—more cheaply purchasable in the metropolis than even in the Bay; and there is a great waving of white pocket-handkerchiefs, and juvenile shouts of 'Papa!' as the boat sweeps up to the end of the pier. Herne Bay boasts of few dissipations. The people are a generation of early bed-goers, and the candles go out almost as soon as if William's curfew still rung in Kent. But to make amends, they are up with the

dawn, and down to the sea-side, where the wailing of dipped young gentlemen and ladies sounds shrilly over the shingly shore.

But let us be up and stirring. The steamer will carry us for sixpence to Margate, although the best way of entering the town is from the railway, and if at night, so much the better. You pass from a narrow lane to a broad parade, and the graceful sweep of a bay, circled round by terraces and high-piled houses, almost all windows and balconies—a colony of hotels and reading-rooms, baths and billiard-rooms, emporiums and libraries. Passing into the street, you are struck by the fact, that all these high houses have vanished, and instead of them appears a row of neat, little, prettily-got-up, French-looking receptacles—all, as it appears, on the ground-floor; but observing that they have windows behind, you rush towards them, whereunto you are the rather invited by the courteous information of a smart young lady, that the lottery opens, and that Signor Tenore sings exactly at seven; and looking below, find that you are on the top story of the range of buildings—all windows, balconies, and signs you saw before, and which rise like Venice from the sea, with troops of bathing-machines upon the sand. Proceeding to the pier, you find a handsome curved structure, holding within its clasp two or three sloops and a fleet of boats; but, alas! for many hours during the twenty-four the craft lie supine in Margate mud. Then how, you think, do the steamers keep their time; they must land and embark their passengers in boats. Not at all. Proceed to the back of the pier, and you will see a jetty, famous for being partially under water after half-flood, which strangers in the land are ignorant of, and, loitering heedlessly on the jetty-head, they find themselves cut off from their native land by a strait of water, not deep, but formidable to ladies and gentlemen who dread wet feet. Soon a fleet of boats will be around. 'Pull you ashore for a pound, ma'am.' 'Pull you ashore for fifteen shillings, miss.' 'Tide rises very high indeed, sir, a cause of hequinoctials.' Probably the rascal is speaking in June. 'Gen'l'm'n drowned here last week, sir: ask my mate.' 'Yes, sir—most promising young man—left a wife and young twins—all along of not taking a boat.' Despite these threats. If you laugh at them, and adopting a seat on the railing of the pier, with your feet on the bench below, pull out a book, and set in for serious reading, the tone soon changes. 'Take you ashore for half-a-crown, sir.' 'Wet feet werry bad for health, sir.' 'Take you for a shilling, sir.' 'Take you for a sixpence, sir, and a glass of *hale*.' You may accept his reasonable offer, and you will not meet with *fas* *Punica*.

The worst of Margate as a bathing-place is, that the beach is very shallow. But its extent is far greater on either side of the town than that of Ramsgate; and probably from this circumstance it is that the Margatians are enabled to bathe with far more decency than the Ramsgatians, who really, on some occasions, seem to leave all sense of delicacy behind them in their bathing-machines. Margate has other advantages: you can walk among the cliffs and sit upon their peaks, and enjoy the surf below; at Ramsgate, you can only walk below, or walk above the cliffs. The Margate cliffs are broken, picturesque, and have some pretensions to rock: the Ramsgate cliffs are walls of chalk. Besides these natural advantages, the general tone of the bathing society is infinitely more cheerful and unconstrained at Margate than at Ramsgate. Ladies and gentlemen wear rather *outré*, but very convenient and easy-fitting dresses—in fact, marine *déshabillé*—and think nothing of riding donkeys: yellow slippers are universal: mustaches are cultivated and shaved off just as they begin to show: blouses are common, and young ladies have the moral courage to wear their old dresses in the morning. In the evening,

however, all is gaiety. The emporiums and marine libraries are full of nicely-dressed girls with their mamma, and the men have brushed themselves up and look quite dandies: the wheel of the harmless lottery whirls round, and all sorts of trifling fancy articles fly rapidly about: the street is quite a blaze of light, and one buzz of conversation. The German band, however, drowns it, and with it the tenor of Signor Milanese, the baritone of M. Jules de Montmorency, the basso profondo of Herr Gruffingroullin, with the modest English voice of Miss Dorothy Done, who sings *Annie Laurie* and *The Low-backed Car*—albeit, not ladies' songs—really quite beautifully, as so say both Mr and Mrs Brown, who can't abide the foreign singers nohow.

Now this is a pleasant way of spending the evening, intermingled, if the moon is bright, with stolen walks on the jetty, on the sands, amongst the cliffs, with the dash of the surf making pleasanter music than even the German band, the stars twinkling above, and those sea-stars, the light-houses and the light-ships, twinkling below—these promenades proceeding until Emma says: 'Laa, Charles, what'll ma say?' and the couple arrive just as Mr Brown has begun to look for his hat, and Mrs Brown has broken off a confidential conversation with Mrs Jones to say: 'Laa, Missis Jones, I wonder where our Emma can have got to!'

Ramsgate calls Margate 'low'; Margate calls Ramsgate 'stuck up'; the Ramsgate ladies stigmatise the Margate ladies as 'things'; the Margate ladies retort by: 'O my—the creatures!' We shall not venture to decide upon the justice of either form of expression, but leave the Guelphs and Gibelines of the bathing-machines to the enunciation each of their own opinions.

The North Foreland, with its bright light-house, divides the rival bathing-machines. The cliff butts boldly at the sea, and the surf of the German Ocean whitens it half-way up. Eastward of the main rock lie—snugly nestled in a wide chasm, with a sparkling beach, the foot of which the sea continually laves, with a weather-beaten pier and a clump of houses, some large, white, and detached—a few villas and several hotels, which look like dear chargers. Nor do they belie their looks: all coast hotels are dear, but Broadstairs bills beat them every one. The place, in fact, is the aristocratic bathing-station of Kent. No donkeys here; few yellow slippers. If Ramsgate is stuck up, what is Broadstairs? In the skies of exclusivism. This pretty little town has been greatly brought into notice by Mr Charles Dickens making it his summer residence. When he is there, all Broadstairs is instinct with *Pickwick*, *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, and all the rest. 'Look, sir,' said a boatman to us as we stood chatting on the beach—'look, sir; them's Mr Dickens's footmarks, and them's the footmarks of Mr Dickens's dog.'

Passing the country-house, if we mistake not, of Sir Moses Montefiore, which, with its shrubberies, cuts the walk along the cliff between Ramsgate and Broadstairs in two—an obstruction for which the honourable baronet is frequently spoken of in terms which ought to keep his ears in a perpetual tingle—Ramsgate, with its capacious outer and inner harbour, and its noble sweep of pier, its terraces upon the cliffs on either side of the valley up which the town extends—its range of hotels upon the port, and a handsome church tower overtopping all—opens—sea and land—before us. The pier in Ramsgate is the all in all in the way of promenade, and a very noble promenade it makes—massive and stately, and nearly (the east pier) two-thirds of a mile in length. The harbour, which is one of refuge, has sheltered 300 ships at a time; but unfortunately it is a tidal one; and in the daytime, when the ball is low upon the signal-post—and in the night, when no beam shines from the Port light-tower—no ship, blow high, blow low, dare enter. But in the

summer, the fierce south-east gales seldom trouble the waters, and the prevalent west is a smooth-water wind. Then is the time for boating-parties; not of the 'nobbs'; they would disclaim the mixed, but often pleasant company who find themselves together on a fishing or shell-picking expedition to Pegwall Bay; on a trip through the Downs to Deal; on a sail round the Gull-Island, or for a tumble off the North Foreland.

Turning from the pier, let us ascend the town. No lotteries, no little concerts, no reading-rooms; no nothing, to pass the early night away. Only on the terraces groups of lazy promenaders, balcony-parties, flirting and laughing with each other; and musical-parties, from which the sounds of the piano and the harp float through the open windows into the cool night-air, and provoke groups of cynical critics. Take Ramsgate in its daily aspect, and the first thing that will strike you is the dressiness of the visitors: ladies go down to bathe before breakfast in silks and satins, and gentlemen are made up for the day. There is little *négligé*, few yellow slippers or straw-hats; donkeys are only for the children; broughams, phaetons, curricles, and so forth, for those who have them or who can pay for them. The morning bathing, when comparatively few people are on the beach, is pleasant and comfortable; but the scene when it is highwater at noon, or later, is of a description which would give the stranger but a queer idea of Ramsgate delicacy. The ladies bathe nearest the pier, and the space between them and the gentlemen is often not more than the breadth of two machines. But this is not the worst. The portion of the beach appropriated to the ladies is perfectly crammed both with ladies and gentlemen of every age, sitting in long rows of chairs, or pushing about, and not five yards from the lady-bathers; who, on their part, jump up and down, and splash each other, apparently with a perfect disregard of the crowd of spectators, male and female. Frequent complaints are made in that grand depository of grievances the *Times*, generally signed 'The Father of a Family,' of the bathing doings at Ramsgate, and especially of the disgraceful practice of using telescopes with perfect *sans-froid* and freedom.

We leave Ramsgate, then, with its 'stuckupphishness' and stiff and formal society, and its peculiar bathing-practices, which hardly correspond to the etiquette and formality observed in other moments, and proceed eastward along the coast. We can devote little space to Deal, which is not a bathing-place, except for Yarmouth and a few of the local towns; and which is a long slip of a sea-faring place, built so near the sea, that in rough weather the foam—and sometimes something more substantial—cleans the walls, and salts the windows of the houses exposed to it. Dover, which comes next, can hardly be called a bathing-place, although it has a shingly beach and machines. Five or six score of what old John Bunyan would call 'the better sort,' inhabit the houses of the terrace, and walk and ride thereon with great assiduity. The harbour is a bustling place—boats and fishing-craft, with vessels of a larger size, and the mail-steamers, French and English alternately, giving it its principal vitality, by their continual arrivals and departures. A few make Folkestone a bathing-place, their principal abode being the Pavilion Hotel, an establishment of which the *Times* lately managed materially to reduce the tariff. Their main amusement is attending regularly to the starting and arrival of the boats—events more particularly interesting in blowing weather, when the passengers embark looking uncommonly grim, but comforting each other by mutual assurances that there will be no sea 'to signify,' their eyes all the time fixed dolefully on the white 'sea-horses' rolling and breaking before a snell east wind; while two hours after the starting-boat had made her first leap and tumble outside the pier, the arriving-boat brings a dismal cargo of wretched

humanity, stretched on the deck in every attitude of agony, or slowly and groaningly gathering themselves up and thanking Heaven it is over.

We shall be obliged, as space wanes, to omit Hastings, with the mere mention that it is a very pretty, little, gentlemanly and lady like town, frequented by the classes alluded to; that it is remarkable for clean, broad, and handsome streets; for slabby terraces and a broad-sweeping beach; that the country behind is beautifully wooded; and that the atmosphere is said to be the most anti-consumptive in England. The vicinity is noted for its mutton—the famous South-down breed; and the Hastings fishermen are accounted the most expert masters of their craft along the coast.

Between this pleasant little place and Brighton, which must be the last of our Sea-side Resorts of the Londoners, looms high and grand the magnificent promontory of Beachy Head, against the iron front of which many a goodly ship has gone to pieces, and at the foot of which many a sailor has found his grave. Thence a long line of cliffs leads on to an extensive break in the range, at the east end of which, upon a bank or terrace, stretches, for more than three miles, a magnificent range of lordly mansions of great height; the whiteness of the long façade relieved by the profusion of the windows with their green jalousies and Venetian blinds. The ridge upon which Brighton is built is not uniform; the extreme east part is the highest, but suddenly fades away into an open space—the Steyne—on which stands a statue of the founder of the place, and that architectural abortion which he built—the Pavilion, which deserved well to share the fate of its prototype the Kremlin. Brighton is best seen from the sea. We well remember crossing in a night-boat from Dieppe, and coming on deck in the early morning, when the whole length of the magnificent façade was bathed in one flood of glory from the rising sun. We never witnessed a more imposing sight—the place looked like a fairy city; or, to be more prosaic, the brilliant drop-scene of a theatre. As we approached the pier, however, the illusion began, as details became more visible, to lose its charm, and was finally brought utterly to nought by a hoarse voice, which bawled from the end of the pier, 'Cauntswon.' This was utterly unintelligible; but as it seemed to create some sensation amongst a certain class of persons on board—not the crew—we made inquiries, and were gratified by the information, that Ben Caunt had licked Bendy for the belt; which, being interpreted, means—that Mr Benjamin Caunt had overcome Mr Bendigo in a pugilistic passage-of-arms for the belt, the holder of which is the 'fistic' champion of England.

Every one knows that Brighton sprung from a fishing-village into a gorgeous city under the fostering patronage of his gorgeous majesty George IV. For several years it was the centre of fashion, and overflowed with the *crème de la crème*; but, alas! times changed. George got tired of his city by the sea; he found, too, that the society was rapidly getting mixed. The Pavilion was left to the rats and mice, until the corporation bought it, and devoted it to institutions, concerts, and lectures upon useful knowledge. An odd social change followed. The *plebs*, who had driven the king from Brighton, followed the example of royalty, and left it too. Not so the aristocracy; many of them had bought or leased houses of large size, and they were unwilling to part with them at a dead loss. So a Brighton season, in fact, two Brighton seasons, were gradually formed; and the town is now, for many months of the year—principally in winter—fully as aristocratic as it was under the king, and much more moral. So far as the ordinary class of Londoners go, they abound plentifully throughout the year in Brighton. The town is easily accessible; and a trip to Brighton, a dip in the sea, or a hot-water bath, a good dinner, a walk on the chain-pier, and back at night,

is a favourite mode of passing a day, particularly a Sunday, with the middle classes of London. Some few may take lodgings, mostly in the central or suburban streets of the town. A Brighton tradesman, on one asking him whether the town was full, replied that it was almost empty, and on our rejoining that it appeared full, and that we recognised very many London faces, he overwhelmed us at once by explaining, that what was meant by full, was not that hotels and lodging-houses were full, but that the great terraces and squares were let for the season. 'You see, sir,' said our informant, 'it's not by letting apartments, or keeping hotels, but by letting houses, that we get on in Brighton. It's the aristocracy, sir, that stays here for months and months, and spends no end of money amongst the trades-people, that makes Brighton.'

And, truth to tell, the Steyne, Kemp-ton, and, in fact, the whole range of sea-parade, is, on a sunny afternoon, in the season, as crowded by equipages of as brilliant and varied a character, drawn by as magnificent horses, and by as many equestrians, and as many ladies *en Amazone*, than even the Ladies' Mile in Hyde Park can boast of in early July at four on a Sunday afternoon. Some of the equipages, and some of the ladies' dresses, may be more flaunting and flashy than those generally seen: some of the gentlemen may be rather 'loud' in their dresses and their talk; their neck-ties and their waistcoats may be like the banners of the Assyrians, 'all gleaming with purple and gold,' but the contour of the face, the complexion, and the hair, make it tolerably evident that they are descendants of the race in whose side the Assyrians were long a stinging thorn.

A very pretty feature in the Brighton parades is the sudden dash by of a squadron of young ladies at a gallop rather than a canter—their habits, and here and there a stray curl, flying loose; the whole troop accompanied by only one gentleman in a shiny-black hat, a white 'choker,' and the glance of a yellow waistcoat—over which is buttoned a cut-away coat—dog-skin gloves, and, as the playbills say, the whole concluding with tight pantaloons and spurred boots. This gentleman rides like a cavalry officer on the bridle-hand angle of his troop; and you observe how the young ladies occasionally keep their eyes on him, and he on them. A slight bow and an erection of the figure, and a young lady obeys the hint; a significant tightening of the snaffle-rein, and perhaps two or three fair Amazons gracefully draw the white leather through their delicate fingers: a little sign with the riding-switch, and the canter is checked at one simultaneous appeal to the bit, snaffle, and curb. The sport-looking gentleman is a riding-master; and the admirable seat of his pupils, their command over their horses, the grace with which they sit in the trot, and the easy motion of their figures in the canter, shew how successful is his teaching. Kidding, indeed, is one of the favourite recreations, perhaps the most favourite of all in Brighton. The Downs afford a noble arena for a rattling gallop; while the sea-terraces team with a fitting tribunal of critical spectators for dandy riders who wish to shew off in all the niceties of the *manège*.

It will be seen from the above, that the social atmosphere of Brighton is perfectly removed from that of even the genteel Ramsgate. There is no night-chatting from balcony to balcony; bathing is conducted with due decorum; but as the principal season at Brighton is the cold months, warm baths are generally the order of the day. There is no harbour—the chain-pier can hardly be called one; there are no ships, for Brighton gets what she wants by sea from Worthing, and the vessels which pass up Channel generally only sight land somewhere about Beachy Head. These circumstances detract a great deal from Brighton as an ordinary bathing resort. The chain-pier, it is true, forms a pleasant enough promenade; on a stormy

day, and particularly a stormy night, the dash of the waves amongst the timbers, and the showers of the spray across the pathway, almost cause one to fancy that he is at sea, only the lack of motion destroys, pleasantly to most people, the illusion. The only marine excitement of Brighton is the going off and the landing of the fishing-boats, when the surf is rolling, as it often does, high and far upon the beach, and with a sketch of this process we conclude our paper.

When a sou-wester blows, it brings with it the whole swing of the broadest part of the Channel, backed by the Atlantic. The beach at Brighton below the shingle is bare for a considerable distance out, and shallow even in high tides. This, of course, occasions what sailors call 'rollers;' that is, the seas break perhaps a quarter of a mile from the beach, and all between the outer belt and the shingle is a fierce chaos of broken surging water. To enable them to beach in safety, the Brighton fishing-boats somewhat resemble Brobdignag walnut-shells—only perhaps deeper and shorter in their formation. If the surf is very bad, they generally shirk it, and anchor outside until the tide falls, when, of course, the sea falls with it. Occasionally, however, small boats, which are more manageable, wait for a lull, and then dash through the broken water, reaching the regular seas half sinking. The crew of the big boat are transferred, and then comes the tug of war, heaving a heavily-laden yawl. To effect this operation, the reverse moment is chosen in respect to the surf, as in launching. Instead of the lull, the ninth wave, always the highest, is waited for, and as it heaves the tiny craft aloft, the crew pull like demons to keep upon its shoulder. If they overtop that, down goes the boat into the abyss, and in an instant all are buried in the sea. This, seldom happens, however; and if the proceeding be nicely managed, the boat rides triumphantly, just a little behind the curl of the wave, the rowers cautiously backing, and when the huge volume of water bursts into a torrent of tumbling foam, pulling again, like mad creatures; while the bowman, putting away his oar, catches the coil of rope flung by a man up to his waist in the retiring wave, and instantly a crowd of men and women—the fishermen's wives and daughters—lay hold of it, and the boat is high and dry in a moment. The whole proceeding is very exciting, and sometimes, when the boat is upset, intensely so. We once witnessed this catastrophe. The boat went over the curl of the first sea well, but in the broken water the bowman missed the rope; and amid a shrill cry of terror from the women, the back-water carried the boat with it, and the following sea tipped up the stern, the bow hit the sand, and the boat turned bodily over, the crew springing out on either side. In an instant, however, half-a-dozen fine fellows, with lines round their waists, were buffeting the surf; each caught his man, and each rescued fisherman was in a moment in the arms of a wife or a mother.

A FEW JOTTINGS ABOUT MAPS.

THERE are many interesting features presented by maps, and many various circumstances attending their production. Of course, every one knows that as the earth is globular and a map flat, there must necessarily be some kind of distortion in spreading out the various districts and countries; but so long as the portion of country represented on a map is small, or the scale large, the distortion is of no importance. When, however, a large portion of the earth's surface is represented on one sheet, the mappist is puzzled to know how to render the distortion least inconvenient. He adopts different projections, as they are called, according to the purpose for which the map is intended; as the musician adopts one among many systems of tuning or temperament, to lessen a musical difficulty which can

never be wholly removed from keyed instruments. The globular, the orthographic, the stereographic, the gnomonic, and Mercator projections, are so many ways of treating a difficulty which cannot be got rid of. None but a student of geometry can rightly understand these terms; and no ordinary readers of ordinary maps need trouble themselves about them, for the maps of countries are generally so managed as to render the distortion as little as may be.

Where a map is pasted on a spherical surface to form a terrestrial globe, the distortion disappears altogether, for the mimic world is shaped nearly like the real one. But, then, it requires that the paper itself shall be peculiarly shaped; for if a large sheet of paper were pasted on a globe, it would wrinkle round the edges. It requires that the map should be in several pieces, shaped something like the profile of a double-convex lens: there are generally twelve of these, to embrace 30 degrees of longitude each; but the number is sometimes twenty-four, of 15 degrees. Or there may be two circular pieces, to comprise the regions within the two polar circles; and then the remaining pieces or gores would—to use a homely comparison—have somewhat the form of a rolling-pin. Fourteen such pieces, consisting of twelve gores and two circles, would exactly cover a globe without wrinkles, provided they have the due shape and size; and it is the globe-maker's business to see that this due adjustment is obtained. It matters not whether few or all of the pieces are engraved upon one plate, and printed upon one piece of paper; they must be cut out accurately at the outlines, in order that, by being placed edge to edge on the globe, they may completely cover it without lapping or wrinkling. The superior value of a globe over a map depends in part on this exact adaptation of the map surface to the globular surface, thereby obviating the distortion already mentioned.

An interesting inquiry arises, bearing relation to world-maps. In a correct map of the earth, as represented on a globe, what is the relation between the quantities of land and of water? It is not at all generally known how curious are the methods by which this relation has been ascertained. In round numbers, the ratio is known to be about three to one—that is, three times as much water as land on the earth's surface. But scientific men are not satisfied with round numbers, if there is any chance of obtaining others more nearly exact; and we need not feel surprised that the earth's surface has been made the subject of careful inquiry, in respect to the quantities and ratio above adverted to.

So far as we are aware, Dr Halley was the first to experiment upon the paper of maps, as a means of bringing out results of an analogous character. He wished to find how much land was contained in each English county relatively to the others. He had no Ordnance Maps to aid him in those days; he took a six-sheet map, cut out the counties by scissors or pen-knife, and weighed the portions in a delicate balance. It is obvious that the correctness of such a method must depend conjointly on many circumstances—such as the accuracy of the map, the equable thickness of the paper, the correctness of the cutting, and the equity of the balance. Dr Long, some years afterwards, extended the same method to an inquiry concerning the relative quantities of land and water all over the globe. He took the engraved pieces of paper, forming the gores or stripes of a sixteen-inch globe, and cut out the land portions from the water portions; he weighed them against each other, and found that he had 124 grains of land to 349 grains of water. He thus felt emboldened to say, that the water on the earth's surface is a little less than three times the area of the dry land.

But it was left for Professor Rigaud, of Cambridge, to pursue this inquiry with all the nicety of modern

science. He has described in full his mode of proceeding in the *Cambridge Philosophical Transactions*. He procured the engraved and printed sheets for one of Addison's thirty-six-inch globes, on paper selected with especial reference to its equability of thickness and quality. The paper was divided into twenty-four gores, like those of a balloon, each representing 180 degrees of latitude, and 15 degrees of longitude. A little calculation shews that such a globe has a surface of 4071½ square inches. Professor Rigaud was not satisfied with ascertaining the ratio between the land and water in each gore, because future discoveries in geography might vitiate the correctness of the whole gore; but if each gore were cut into several pieces, any one of these might be corrected at any future time without disturbing the rest. He, accordingly, cut each gore at the equator, at the two tropics, and at the two polar circles; and he thus obtained six portions or zones of each gore—namely, arctic, north temperate, north tropical, south tropical, south temperate, and antarctic. The whole surface of the globe was thus cut up into 144 pieces, all bounded by definite geometrical or geographical lines, susceptible of exact description. The professor then gave himself the labour of ascertaining the land and water ratio in each of these numerous pieces; each piece was first weighed singly, then it was cut up into land and water, and each of these was weighed twice over in a very delicate balance. Not only were oceans and seas cut at their boundaries, but estuaries, bays, and indentations of coast. Weights were ascertained down to one-tenth of a grain. Another advantage accruing from the cutting of the map into so many pieces was this—that if any slight inequalities existed in the paper, they would probably compensate each other in different parts of the map. The printing-ink upon each piece of paper was obviously too small in weight to affect the result. The experiment was made with one of Cary's twenty-one-inch globes, as well as Addison's thirty-six-inch; and each corroborated the result obtained from the other.

The tabulation given by Professor Rigaud is very elaborate and remarkable. As he succeeded in obtaining 144 ratios between land and water, he could group these together in any way he pleased. He might shew the ratio for the northern hemisphere as distinguished from the southern, the ratio for the tropics as distinguished from the polar regions, the ratio for one gore of longitude as distinguished from another, the ratio for one zone of latitude as distinguished from another. As the number of grains would of course differ according to the size of the globe, he thought it best to reduce the whole surface into 1000 equal parts, and to express the various ratios in thousands. The minutest point of accuracy which he obtained was this:—Land, 265-9233; water, 734-0762: total, 999-9995. We may, therefore, say, that the land to the water is in the ratio of about 266 to 734. This corresponds so very nearly with the ratio obtained by Dr Long—124 to 349—as to give us confidence in both results. In respect to the great continents and their adjacent islands, the dry land is in the following relative quantities:—Europe, 16½; Asia, 89; Africa, 59½; North America, 50½; South America, 35; and Australia, 15½—making up the total of 266. The northern hemisphere has 197 of land to 303 of water; the southern has 69 of land to 431 of water. This last result is a remarkable one, shewing that in the southern half of the earth there is more than six times as much water surface as land surface. In the south temperate zone, between the southern tropic and the antarctic circle, the water is more than ten times as much as the land; whereas in the north temperate zone the two are nearly equal.

Another interesting matter, to which we wish to advert, is the formation of contour-lines on maps. This contouring is a remarkable process, both in its purpose and in its method. Its object is to exhibit the

levels of a country in a manner intelligible to the eye, shewing heights, not merely on the tops of hills, but round the sides and through the valleys. In ordinary maps, this is done by a kind of shading, sufficient to shew alternations of level, but not the amount of such alternations. Some particular level, on the contouring system, is assumed as a datum—say the mean level of the sea; and lines are engraved to mark all the successive heights of a country above this datum. Each line winds about the country, touching all the points which agree in having one common level; and the line thus necessarily assumes a very tortuous direction, especially in a hilly district. The steeper the natural slope of the ground, the closer together the contour-lines will be; whereas, when the ground slopes very gradually, the lines appear wider apart. Dr Robinson once gave to the British Association a happy illustration of a contour-map, by supposing a card-board model of a district to be built up. 'A square of card-paper is the sea-plane. Conceive now a section of the land, made by a horizontal plane, at the height of ten feet; it will intersect all that rises above that in a variety of curves. Cut these out in the same card-paper, and place them in their proper places on the base-plane. Let another section-plane be taken at twenty feet, repeat the cutting-out and pasting, and so on. You will now build up in steps a model of the ground, every step giving you a levelling, in which the thickness of the paper is ten feet of height. If, now, looking down on such a model, you conceive the various edges of the papers let down to the base-plane, and marked there, you will have a contoured map.'

Doctors differ on this as on other subjects. There has been much discussion concerning the value of contouring in connection with our Ordnance Maps. Ten years ago, Captain Larcom and Dr Robinson strenuously advocated the contouring of the maps resulting from the Ordnance Survey of Ireland; the former stated that the additional expense would not exceed a farthing an acre beyond the eightpence an acre which the original surveying and engraving had cost. Its advantages were said to be as follow: that it at once shews the civil engineer the natural levels of the ground on which he is about to work; that it shews the agriculturist and botanist the different heights at which the same kinds of crops and plants grow in different districts; that it points to the outfall of a district for arterial drainage; that it enables the geologist to note the outcrop of different beds of coal, limestone, ironstone, and other minerals; that it defines the basins and water-sheds by which the water-supply of towns is governed; and that, from a contour-map, accurate model or relief-maps can be made at a very cheap rate. These advantages certainly appear to be very considerable; but when a committee of the House of Commons investigated the subject of the Scottish Ordnance Survey in 1851, Mr Stephenson and Mr Locke threw cold water on the value of the contouring system, so far as civil engineering is concerned; and, whatever may be the case with respect to Ireland, the committee, after hearing several witnesses, recommended that contouring should not be adopted in the maps resulting from the Scottish survey now being carried out.

There is a singular mode of representing elevation or relief by means of engraved lines, adapted rather for engravings of models than of maps. Mr Bate's machine effects this in a beautiful manner. If we look at an ordinary steel-plate engraving, we find that the lights and shadows depend upon the wideness and closeness of the inked lines; and Mr Bate's machine is so regulated, that the intervals between the engraved lines vary inversely to the boldness of the relief in a medallion or coin: they are very close together, to represent the ascending slope of a bold protuberance, while on moderately level portions they are wide apart. Specimens of this kind of engraving are to be met with in the *Art*

Journal and other publications, so marvellous in effect as to render it difficult for the mind to receive them as plane flat engravings.

To return, however, to the subject more immediately under notice. We have briefly mentioned relief-maps. Such maps possess this advantage: that, by exhibiting the alternations of hill and valley, the physical capabilities of a country are at once made manifest to the eye. Nearly all large cities and manufacturing towns are built upon the banks of rivers; these rivers flow through valleys, and these valleys are for the most part caused by the upheaval of neighbouring mountains; so that, in fact, mountains are the prime movers of commercial activity, in so far as concerns physical geography rather than geology. And, both from the proximity of busy towns, and the easier attainment of levels, engineers more frequently construct roads, canals, and railways along valleys than over hilly districts. It is for these and similar reasons that a relief-map is fitted to convey a better notion of the surface of a country than flat engraved maps.

There has long been a custom, on the part of military engineers, of constructing model-maps of fortresses, encampments, and other works pertaining to the military art. Such maps are frequently exhibited in public, at one or other of our institutions. For instance, there is, or was a few years ago, in the United Service Museum, a model of part of the island of St Vincent, with its fortifications; and another, six or seven feet square, of the intrenched camp at Linz, in Upper Austria. In the Rotunda at Woolwich, there are model-maps or plans of the royal dockyards at Woolwich, Deptford, Chatham, Portsmouth, and Plymouth, and also one of the Rock of Gibraltar. But these are on too bold a scale of relief to come properly under the designation of model-maps: they are models. The model-maps, more properly so called, are such as the French relief-map of the district of Neufchatel, and the English relief-map of Edinburgh, in the United Service Museum. Perhaps the most wonderful production of this kind was Lieutenant Siborn's relief-map of the field of Waterloo, exhibited in London a few years ago. It occupied a surface of no less than 420 square feet. It exhibited in faithful detail the fields of grass and standing corn, the woods, the vineyards, the gardens, the hedges, the trees, the fallow-lands, and all the undulations of surface on that celebrated field. So far as regards these undulations of surface, it was a relief-map; but the 200,000 Lilliputian men and horses spread over the field gave it the character of a model.

Besides the advantage to the military engineer, and the instruction to pupils in general geography, relief-maps are valuable to the civil engineer in respect to drainage and irrigation. Bauerkeller's relief-maps of towns and districts are becoming pretty well known in this country; and English firms have to some extent engaged in the same kind of enterprise.

It is curious and instructive to observe the changes which have been made in the material employed for such maps. Improved manufacturing processes have made themselves felt here as in other directions. Cork has been and still is a favourite substance for the larger models—such as that of Waterloo—on account of its lightness, durability, and ease in cutting. Wood and pith are frequently employed. Sometimes a mould is made, and from this mould a cast is taken in wax, clay, sulphur, or plaster. But there is one particular circumstance which exerts much influence on the choice of material. If there be only one example or copy of the model—such as that of Waterloo—the artist may choose which among many kinds of material will make the most durable and efficient model; but if it is to be sold in dozens or hundreds of copies, like a book or an engraved print, then must he so arrange his plans, that he can produce them

quickly as well as efficiently; and this simple fact has stirred up the wits of the inventors. It is felt that, for such a purpose, after a correct model has been made, a mould must be produced from the model, and then casts obtained from the mould; and a field is at once open for the exercise of skill and judgment, in determining whether plaster, sulphur, gutta-percha, vulcanised rubber, papier-maché, carton pierre, or other material shall be employed for the mould or the casts, or both. When the wonderful electro-deposit process became established, a wholly new power was placed at the disposal of the relief-map maker: he then knew that he could form a metallic deposit on the surface of a model; and that this metallic deposit, if sufficiently thick and properly adjusted, might be used as a stamp for producing relief-maps in paper. The committee of the House of Commons, which collected evidence respecting the Scottish Ordnance Survey in 1851, while speaking of the alleged advantages of contour-maps, say: 'It is likewise said that from the reduced contours, accurate model-maps, or maps in relief, can be made at an inconsiderable cost; a map of this description having been made of the county of Kilkenny on the scale of half an inch to the mile, at a cost of L.7; of which map, impressions can be sold to the public at the rate of 5s.' These impressions are, we believe, produced in the way just described—namely, by stamping on paper with an electro-deposited reverse from a model.

These several jottings are given under the supposition that the reader is sufficiently familiar with ordinary maps to need no description of their usual construction or purpose.

TRouble-THe-House:

A LEGEND OF LIVONIA.

ONCE on a time there lived, in the province of Livonia, a certain peasant, named Peter Letski. Peter had no relation that he knew of in this world but his mother. She and her husband had come from Courland long ago, when they were married; but the man died five-and-twenty years before the time of our story; and old Roskin and her son lived on in the cabin of pine-logs he had built on the lands of the Boyar Nicklewitz. The boyar took rank with the high and ancient nobility of Russia. His ancestors had fought against the Mongols, and held office under Ivan the Terrible. They were said to have been rich; but little of their wealth had descended, for there was not a poorer estate nor a more prudently supplied *hof* in the province. Theodore Nicklewitz sowed his own hemp and rye, mowed his meadows, and set a good example to the reapers in harvest-time; while his wife and two daughters brewed quass, baked rye-loaves, preserved everything, from cranberries to caviare, against the winter, and spun with their maids great packs of yarn, for sale to the eastern merchants.

In short, there was work for man and maid at the *hof*; but the quass was always strong, the holidays were well kept there, and most of the peasants thought a seat in its great hall worth having, when the snow was deep in Livonia. Somehow, Peter and his mother preferred their old cottage. It was built, as we have said, of pine-logs, out of which were cut the door and window, the latter glazed, so to speak, with a sheet of thin mica; the roof was of wattles, overlaid a yard deep with turf and clay, and as green as a meadow in summer. Their property, besides a cow and a patch of rye-ground, consisted of a loom, a stove, a spinning-wheel, and a chest, wherein were laid up the Sunday-clothes which Peter's father had left him, and those which old Roskin inherited from her mother. They were free peasants of the old Germanic race, long settled in Courland. No boyar owned or maintained them; but Roskin was a noble spinner, and Peter had few equals

at the spade, axe, or flail. Of schools, Peter Letski knew nothing; books he had never seen, except in church; and the only education his mother gave him was: 'My son, be honest, and trust in God.'

Under that brief, but often-repeated lesson, Peter grew up one of the best sons in the province. It was his fixed opinion, that no woman on earth could equal his mother in knowledge, prudence, and housekeeping—besides, she had been friends, relations, and all to him. Though poor, they had been happy together in the log-cabin, whose rent, as well as that of the ryefield, was paid in hard work to the thrifty boyar. In summer and harvest time, Peter was bound to devote certain days to his fields; Roskin spun at the hof in winter evenings; while her son made baskets, nets, and fishing-tackle, always getting as near as he could to the wheel turned by the pretty Niga, whose soft blue eyes and light golden hair had turned the heads of half the peasants in her neighbourhood. Like Peter, Niga was an only child, but death had taken her mother. Her father, honest Ivan, as the peasants called him, was a stout old boor, who hewed wood in summer in the forest, and in winter at the hof: he and his axe belonged to the boyar. Niga, of course, was a born serf, but old Roskin said she would make a good wife. Peter thought so too; and the wedding-crowns of gilt paper, kept in the neighbouring church, would have been required, but for a scheme of their common master. His old nurse had died some years before, leaving an unmarried daughter, for whom the boyar had promised to provide; and, to do him justice, he tried to find her a husband; but Ratinka had become so notable for tongue and temper throughout the parish, that neither serf nor freeman could be induced to take her for better for worse, even with a promised portion of twenty silver rubles.

All his own serfs were unfortunately married. Theodore Nicklewitz had, therefore, fixed his eyes on Peter, as the only chance for Ratinka; and as neither he nor his mother liked to leave their old cottage, and they could not buy Niga's freedom, the young man was obliged to content himself with avoiding his intended spouse as far as possible. When things were in this state, a courier from Petersburg arrived one summer-day at the hof with great intelligence. A younger brother of the boyar's father, who, having no estate, not liking the church, and still less the army, had degraded himself in the eyes of his relations so far as to become a corn-merchant. Of course he was regarded as a blot in the escutcheon: no one spoke of him, even at Christmas; but the man lived long, gathered money, retired from business, and died in his country-house near Riga, very old, rich, and intestate.

Theodore Nicklewitz was his nearest heir, and an honest lawyer (we are writing of old times) sent him word to come and take possession. It was an event in the boyar's life, for he had never been so far from home; but he sent for the priest, made his will, and took five stout men to guard him. Peter's master obtained his inheritance; but so much time was spent in proving himself the heir according to law, and in hunting up the old merchant's money where it lay in banks and bonds, that the corn was reaped and housed, the snow had fallen, the frost set in, and there was safe travelling over lake and river, before Theodore Nicklewitz, with the goods and chattels of that discarded relative, gathered to the last rag, and packed on sundry sledges, drove home to his careful family.

Half his servants had been sent for to help in that home-bringing, and among the rest Peter Letski. The sledge he drove was a borrowed one, and somewhat crazy, on which account it was placed under his care, for Peter was a prudent driver. For the same reason, the goods packed in it were the very gleanings of the merchant's country-house—old coats, shattered crockery, and odds and ends of all sorts, which the boyar

thought might be useful some day. Peter's horse was borrowed also, and lazy with long service. Vigilance and exertion on the driver's part were required to keep up with the company. Night had fallen on them while far from the end of their journey, but master and man went merrily on through the keen frost and clear starlight. They were bringing goods and money to the hof: the boyar would be a rich man now; the serfs looked for more liberal housekeeping; and Peter began to speculate on the probabilities of Ratinka's getting married. The old horse was going steadily; he drew his wolf-skin cloak closer round him, and one dream maybe followed another through his brain, till a suitor was found, Ratinka disposed of, and Niga and himself dancing at her wedding.

Here a sound, as of somebody stepping into his sledge among the rags and crockery, made Peter start up and rub his eyes. No one was there—but he had been asleep, and dreaming. The horse, left to its own discretion, had been distanced by the whole company. Peter couldn't hear a sound of the sledge-bells, but he knew they were not three versts from home, for on his right lay a ruined castle, where, it was said, a covetous bishop had lived long ago, and oppressed the country by exacting tithes and dues, till the northern heathens took the castle, and hanged him. Its roofless walls stood gray and lonely on the frozen plain. Peter urged his horse onward, till they were fairly left behind; but, just as he drew up his cloak once more, and settled himself to go home comfortably, a sharp shrill voice at his very side said: 'That's a fine night, Peter Letski!'

'It is,' said Peter, his hair beginning to rise, for he could see nobody. 'Who are you?'

'They call me Trouble-the-house,' replied the voice. 'It is an odd name, friend,' said Peter. 'Where did you come from?'

'Never mind where I came from,' said the voice in a still sharper tone. 'I'm going home to the hof with you and the last of this fine legacy.'

Peter was frightened into silence by this statement; he would have jumped out, but the old horse had suddenly quickened its pace to a full gallop, and the sledge flew over the snow so fast that the lights of the hof were in sight; and in a minute more, Peter was through the timber-gate and in the yard, where the rest of the company were rapidly unloading.

Every man, from the boyar downward, inquired what had frightened his horse, for the creature stood trembling. Peter didn't care to tell them; but there was no sledge in the yard more quickly emptied than his own. Nothing but the rags and the crockery could Peter see, though he thought there was a kind of rustle in the rye-straw as the last old pot came out, and a queer sound of stumping steps going in before them all to the great kitchen, where a supper, which satisfied even the serfs' expectations, awaited them.

There was no want of brawn, sour cabbage, and hard cheese on the long rough table, at which, after old Livonian fashion, master and servant sat according to rank; yet the feast did not go off so joyously as might have been anticipated. The youngest daughter broke a china bowl which had been in the family for fifty years—that upset the boyardeen; the boyar became so critical before the bottle of corn-brandy on his right was quite empty, that he found fault with everything said or done; and all agreed that Peter Letski did no justice to himself and the supper.

Peter lost no time in relating the cause of that unwonted neglect to his mother when safe in their own cottage; and after minute inquiries touching what he had to drink on the road, old Roskin said she had never heard of such a traveller in all the tales of Courland—one didn't know what might come home with a corn-merchant's legacy; but her advice was, to keep the story between themselves till Father Michael their priest should return from visiting his brother in Upper

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Lithuania, which would certainly take place before Christmas. His mother's advice was Peter's law. He went on thrashing, basket-making, and sleeping, as in other winters; old Roskin, too, spun as usual at the hof, but the hof was not the place it had been. Its industrious quiet had been broken to bring home that legacy, and could not be restored. The servants grumbled for stronger quass; the daughters repined for new dresses; the boyardeen grew more careful than ever; and the boyar thought that every man was stealing. Then there were grand visitors, counts and barons, who came from leagues away, and had to be entertained in the great parlour, never before opened except for wedding-feasts. Among them was a certain Count Ratschhoff, who would have married Theodore's eldest daughter, but the boyar and he could never come to an understanding on the subject of her dowry. However, the count had been in Petersburg seven years looking after a legacy he did not get, and having some knowledge of the great world there, he undertook to instruct the whole house of Nicklewitz touching their dignity and interest.

Under his direction, the peasants were not allowed to speak in the old familiar forms to their betters; the kitchen was obliged to wait till the parlour had finished, and got only broken victuals; the rye-bread was weighed, the quass was measured; and the boyar resolved to have Ratinka married without delay. His determination was signified the week before Christmas, when one evening after dinner, Peter was summoned to the parlour-door, to see his master seated in great state with his pipe, his tobacco-box, and a quart-cup in the form of an eagle, filled to the brim with corn-brandy, before him. Peter had never beheld the splendours of that apartment. Its silver candlesticks, its walls covered with crimson leather, and its gilt ceiling, which shone on the wedding festivities of Theodore's great-grandfather, overwhelmed the Courland peasant, but his mind was relieved from the weight of its magnificence by his master demanding: 'Peter Letski, when do you mean to marry Ratinka, my nurse's daughter? I will give her a portion of twenty silver rubles. Father Michael will be here in three days; and my will is, that you make ready for the wedding.'

'Master,' said Peter quietly, 'it is my fear that Ratinka might not agree well with my mother.'

'Your mother!' cried the boyar fiercely, for he had tried the brandy; 'I'll have no such excuses. Either marry Ratinka or leave my land.'

Peter had never seen the boyar so angry, and he stammered out in his confusion: 'I knew how it would be when Trouble-the-house came after the legacy.'

It so happened that Count Ratschhoff, who sat drinking with the boyar, imagined, and not without private reasons, that Peter was speaking of him; so with wrath in his eyes, and brandy in his brain, he made but one bound from the table to poor Peter, seized him by the collar of his sheepskin, and kicked him out of the hof.

Though a free man, Peter was brought up in Livonia, and ran as fast as possible from the count's boots. The night was pitch-dark, for moon and stars were hidden by a heavy mist; and when Peter thought of slackening his pace, neither the hof nor its dependencies could be seen. There was a red gleam on the plain before him, however, which he took to be the great pine-torch shining through his mother's window. Old Roskin was at home that day nursing their cow, which had fallen sick, and Peter had sad intelligence for her. He knew it would break his mother's heart to leave the old cottage, and she didn't admire Ratinka more than himself; but the young man resolved to go home and take her advice anyway. The light guided him steadily through the mist, but Peter never thought the way so long. He quickened his pace: the light grew larger and stronger. It wasn't his mother's torch now, but the blaze of a huge fire,

which, to Peter's amazement, rose from the bishop's ruined castle, at the entrance of which he found himself, while a dead horse and an upturned sledge lay close by on the snow.

Peter had a good conscience, but he was frightened to the heart when the sharp shrill voice once more saluted him with: 'Peter Letski, that's a fine night!'

'Middling,' said Peter. 'Who are you?' as, looking in its direction, he saw a dwarfish old man—clothed in rags, which had once been rich fur and velvet, and so thin that his bones seemed fleshless—straining and striving to raise the upturned sledge.

'I'm a brother of the traveller you took home with the corn-merchant's legacy,' said the dwarf.

'Are there many of you?' inquired Peter.

'A great family, and like to be greater,' replied the dwarf. 'Come and help me to raise this sledge.'

'Is it yours?' said Peter, who would have helped anything, as between them the sledge was lifted, and he saw it was richly lined and gaily painted.

'Everything is ours,' cried the dwarf, thrusting his hand under the crimson cushion, and drawing out a leathern money-bag. 'Take this,' he continued, chinking it at Peter's ear, 'and I'll go home with you. What are you thinking of, man?'—as Peter held back both his hands. 'This would buy the land your cottage stands on; and the boyar will be glad enough to sell it before my brother's done with him.'

'I'm thinking how my mother would like it,' said Peter.

'Your mother!' cried the dwarf. 'What can she do for you and Niga?'

'She taught me to be honest, and trust in God,' said Peter.

At the last word, he felt the heavy bag of rubles thrown on his feet. The red fire-light sank, and with it the old dwarf vanished, and a long moan sounded through the ruins. Peter knelt down in the darkness, and said his prayers; before he finished, the rising moon was scattering the mist, and by its light he saw what the fire had not shewn him—a traveller lying at no great distance, as if he had fallen from the sledge. Peter ran to him: he was sound asleep, and covered with a good fur-mantle. So, carefully replacing the money-bag under the cushion, he ran for help to the nearest cottage. Five strong peasants assisted Peter to carry the traveller home; his sledge, with all it contained, also found room in the log-cabin, for the poor horse had broken its neck by falling on the slippery snow. Old Roskin said she never heard such snoring as the stranger practised that night; but next morning he awoke, well, and much astonished. Peter explained how their acquaintance had commenced, presented him with all his travelling chattels safe and entire, even to the empty flask, which had contained three pints of Livonian brandy. The traveller's own story set forth, that he was a Lithuanian merchant, on his journey to collect debts and purchase linen yarn in the province; that the mist or the brandy had bewildered him; and that of the ragged dwarf he knew nothing. No hospitable invitations of its lord, however, could induce him to take rest and refreshment at the hof; but he presented forty rubles to Peter, half that sum to the parish church, purchased a peasant's horse, and took his departure. It must have been through that Lithuanian merchant that the tale of Peter's adventures oozed out, even before the arrival of Father Michael; but, far from being warned, the boyar swore Peter had slandered his noble house, refused all offers for his cottage-ground, and vowed to take a great revenge, by marrying him to Ratinka the day after Christmas. Old Roskin had made up her mind to retire unincumbered with their forty rubles, for Father Michael's pleadings on their behalf had failed; but, on Christmas-night, festivities ran so high, that the hof was set on fire, and before morning burned to the ground. Very

little of goods or legacy was saved; but stumping steps were heard to go in before the family to the hunting-lodge on the edge of the forest, where they took refuge. Theodore Nicklewitz sold the Letskis their cottage-ground, for he was in want of rubles; and a pitch-gatherer, who came to help at the fire, and was a stranger, having consented to marry Ratinka, Peter and Niga did dance at her wedding, which preceded their own a whole week, to eschew the remnants of the boyar's displeasure. The peasants, of course, rebuilt their lord's house, but the wealth and dignity of it was over, and Count Ratschoff was seen there no more. It was believed, however, that the guest who came in Peter's sledge was happily transferred, with a quantity of old clothes and utensils, in which the boyar paid Ratinka's promised portion, to the cottage of the pitch-gatherer, where the peasantry asserted peace was never after known. Regarding its precise nature, neither Peter nor his neighbours could ever be certain; that question foiled Father Michael himself; but when abundant harvests or profits of any kind are gathered in, the good people of Livonia still hope that none of the sledges may bring home Trouble-the-house.

PRESENT ASPECTS OF LIFE ASSURANCE.

It is, with a large proportion of the community, a duty of the first importance to establish assurances upon their lives; but it is also of great consequence to these individuals, that they should look well to the responsibility, present and prospective, of the offices in which they do the business, lest, insuring in an unsound one, their families ultimately find their hopes frustrated. In former times, the setting up of a life-assurance office was a rare event, and, in general, carefully considered. If a company with a large subscribed capital, then the public looked to that capital; if a mutual-assuring society, with no subscribed capital, it was usually felt as necessary for a considerable number of persons to enter at the first start, so as to raise a fund by their combined premiums. In these latter cases, too, great parsimony as to the expenses of business was deemed necessary. We have heard of one such office, now of good date and great business, where the manager had at first only fifty pounds a year, and the directors for some years acted without any remuneration whatever. Now things are much changed. Within the last eight years, there has been a perfect litter of new offices, proprietary, mutual, and mixed, of which it is no harshness to say, that three-fourths of them are totally unrequired, and ought not to exist. We have seen clear documentary proof regarding many of these concerns, that, for the first few years, their expenses and salaries have absorbed their whole, or nearly their whole receipts, leaving little or nothing to accumulate for the satisfaction of 'claims.' Such offices, of course, are quicksands, in which the hopes of insurers and their families will most probably be ingulfed, instead of promised lands, in which these hopes will meet with due fruition. A paper-war, of which the public hears very little, rages between certain old cautious actuaries and the conductors of these new concerns, and much bad blood has been engendered in the case. Unluckily, the head of an old office may be taunted with interested views in raising an alarm about new and rival concerns: hence, perhaps, many of the well-meant warnings of this class have passed in vain. We, however, being in a position to be perfectly impartial, may hope to be listened to where they are not.

We therefore venture to remark, that it appears to us as if it would be unsafe for the individual citizen proposing an assurance upon his life, to enter into connection with any office whatever, of less than seven years' standing, without the most careful previous investigation of its affairs. If he be so skilled in accounts as to make such an investigation confidently, he may be safe.

If not, he had better attach himself to some of the older offices, albeit they may make less attractive promises. We feel that this is a hard view to take of some scores of apparently active and flourishing undertakings; but it is not taken without good reason, and it is only expressed because we feel ourselves to be under retainer for the public—the servants of the many, not the few.

It cannot be doubted that some of the new undertakings will ultimately be successful, and take root for a secure old age. What we are concerned with, however, is the fact, that many of them have no solid assurance of such a destiny. What increases the danger, is the strangely plausible face usually put upon their balance-sheets and reports. We have under our hands a confident flourishing account of a meeting which one of them held last spring, after only a few months of existence. So wide are the limits of self-deception and over-hopefulness, that we have no wish to impeach the honour of any person concerned; and yet the amount of error and insecurity involved in the proceedings is astounding. It is a company with 20,000 shares, of which all had been taken up excepting 1400. The shares, however, seem to infer very little actual paid-up capital, for against L.5316 entered as deposited up to 31st December, we observe L.2300 thereof remains in arrear, under the entry, 'Shareholders' Deposits in course of payment.' The sum of L.600 had been received in the form of loans. The premiums received up to the above date, during the four months of the existence of the company, amounted to L.1033, whereas L.289 had been expended in reinsurance, and L.718 issued as loans; or rather, we presume as to the latter sum, that it was in reality premiums allowed to be retained by the persons assured. The premiums in the three ensuing months were such as to raise the total receipts on that score to L.2514, which was vaunted of as something extraordinary. The whole tone of the report was that of a highly prosperous and solidly founded concern. But the real state of the case is only calculated to make the judicious grieve. Let it be observed, when the amount of premiums was reduced by the amount of loans and reinsurance, the receipts of the concern at 31st December were only L.32. Against this and the capital actually advanced, being L.3016 (L.5316 less L.2300), there were—of preliminary expenses, L.1591; of outstanding accounts for expenses of printing, &c., L.927; for furniture, &c., L.254; of other expenses—namely, office salaries, directors' fees, &c., L.1194; making in all, L.3966. These particulars are so curiously arranged in the accounts, that the awful responsibility does not appear. Well, this is not all. Inspired with an amount of innocent sanguineness in which many will be at a loss to believe, it was proposed at the meeting, and carried, that a dividend of five per cent. be paid on the capital, and that the directors should receive a gift of L.1500 for the 'time, labour, and attention' they had bestowed upon the concern. A dinner for 200 persons at an expensive hotel followed, costing in itself probably fully more than the balance actually in the hands of the company, while the funds for the satisfaction of 'claims,' must of course be entirely matters of hope. Members of parliament and other men of name countenanced all these proceedings, unable, as we may charitably assume, to solve the simple questions involved in them. We repeat, that we are willing to suppose that the officers of this company are in perfectly good faith in all that they are doing; but we must, nevertheless, be allowed the privilege of regarding all such establishments as fraught with extreme danger to all the persons who become in any way connected with them.

While it is extremely desirable to multiply life-assurance policies, and thus extend an unqualified blessing over society, we demur altogether to a multiplication of offices as conducive to this end, or as being in any way useful to the public. It may, on the

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contrary, be injurious, for a well-constituted office can do a large as well as a small business, and the more business done with a certain outlay for expenses, there will be the more money to divide among the assured. But it is needless to discuss the question of this fry of new offices any further, as the plain downright truth is, that they have sprung from no feeling of their needfulness on the part of the public, but, allowing for certain possible exceptions, from a mere sense of the needfulness of lucrative situations on the part of certain individuals, who now appear in the character of their actuaries, secretaries, and managing directors. It is to be hoped that the legislature will see the necessity of imposing some restriction upon the evil, for of course it is not yet at an end. Perhaps it may be necessary for this purpose to fix a minimum of subscribed and paid-up capital at which a company can be allowed to start, and a similar minimum of associators for a mutual-assuring society.

POETRY OF TREES.

Who does not love forest-trees? whether clothed in their radiant robes of spring-tide, green and fresh enough to move the envy of King Oberon; or heavy with leafy splendour, inviting to repose beneath their summer shade; or many-tinted and gaudy with the hues of autumn? Who does not rejoice to listen to nature's minstrelsy, in the early year, beneath embowering woods? And who is there whose heart does not now dance to the merry voices of nutting-parties heard among the groves? There is no need to pause, like Mark Antony, for a reply. Everybody loves the greenwood; everybody visits it who can; therefore we hope everybody will consent to our having a little talk about it.

Among the first of those trees which

Take the winds of March with beauty,
are the willow and the yew, both dedicated by popular superstition to thoughts of gloom and desolation. We can scarcely understand how the 'first green leaves' should have won such a sorrowful reputation. Perchance the peculiar character of the foliage—the dense colour of the yew, and the drooping, tearful branches of the willow—may have suggested the fancy. The blossom of the latter, moreover, like that of the almond-tree,

Blooms on a leafless bough,

and is subject to being cut off untimely by rude blasts from the debatable land of winter. Its nature, also, is moist and cold. On this account it may have been chosen as the wreath worn by forsaken lovers; its fresh coolness would be grateful to a burning brow; and as the ancient Romans were wont to think the cool hellebore good for the insane, so the simple science of olden times may have sought a like relief from mental wo by the appliance of the willow-leaf. Shakespeare—the voice of his age and nation—makes Desdemona thus sing of its emblematic sadness:—

'My mother had a maid called Barbara:
She was in love, and he she loved proved mad,
And did forsake her. She had a song of Willow—
An old thing 'twas, but it expressed her fortune,
And she died singing it:—

The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore-tree,
Sing all a green willow;
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow!

The fresh streams ran by her, and murmured her moans,
Sing willow, willow, willow;
Her salt tears fell from her, and softened the stones,
Sing willow, willow, willow!

Sing all a green willow must be my garland.
Let nobody blame him—his scorn I approve.'

The yew, with the herbs rue and rosemary, and the cypress, shared the willow's sad renown, and with it made up the chaplet of desolation and death. Thus sings the clown in *Twelfth Night*:—

'Come away, come away, Death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid;
Fly away, fly away, breath—
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white stuck all with yew,
Oh! prepare it!
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it.'

In the *Maid's Tragedy*, the forsaken Aspasia thus sings:—

'Lay a garland on my hearse of the dismal yew;
Maidens, willow branches bear; say I died true.'

And to her false lover she says:

'Thus I wind myself
Into this willow garland, and am prouder
That I was once your love, though now refused,
Than to have had another true to me.'

Have we not here the first appearance of this idea, which has since lent its pathos to so many farewells? The Duke of Ormond uttered it of his noble son: 'I had rather possess the memory of my dead Ossory, than have any living son of you all.' It formed the admired epitaph of Miss Dollman of the Leasowes: 'Quanto suavius fui meminisse quam cum reliquis versari.' Tom Moore borrowed it thence for his Mary; and it reached its climax of beauty in Burns's lines to Jessy—lines most like of all to the original passage:—

Although thou man never be mine,
Although ev'n hope is denied—
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing,
Than aught in the world beside, Jessy.

An old song of Dr Hughes, in Henry Lawe's *Ayres*, begins with an allusion to the willow wreath:—

Fain would I love, but that I fear
I quickly should the willow wear.

In a song of Rowe's, both trees are named:—

The last humble boon that I crave,
Is to shade me with cypress and rue,
And when she looks down on my grave,
Let her own that her shepherd was true.

Very tender and gentle is this use of the willow; and yet we think that, after all, it is unfairly dealt with both by lovers and their allies the poets. The first green child of spring, so fresh, so gay, waving with such coquettish grace her drooping foliage over the pond that mirrors her beauty, surely she ought not to be represented as such a Niobe amongst trees. One poet alone appears to have done her full justice. See, he (Keble) says—

The willow springing
Where the waters gently pass,
Every way her free arms flinging
O'er the moist and reedy grass.
Long ere winter blasts are fled,
See her tipped with vernal red,
And her kindly flower displayed,
Ere her leaf can cast a shade.

Though the rudest hand assail her,
Patiently she droops awhile;
And when showers and breezes hail her,
Wears again her willing smile.
Thus I learn Contentment's power
From the slighted willow bower;
Ready to give thanks and live
On the least that Heaven may give.

We do not think the same charge of misappreciation can be made on behalf of the yew. Nature,

who speaks to our eye as well as to our ear, paints it with gloom; and we recognise at a glance the propriety of planting it in church-yards, with respect to poetic sentiment, as well as to its former warlike utility. The effect of leafy sombreness is well conceived and painted by Shelley. He would have us imagine a scene meet for the perpetration of a murder, and draws its visible horrors to a climax by the tree-shadowing at the end:

A bridge
Crosses the chasm, and high above there grow,
With intersecting trunks from crag to crag,
Cedars, and yews, and pines; whose tangled hair
Is matted in one solid roof of shade
By the dark ivy's twine. At noonday here
'Tis twilight, and at sunset blackest night.

Tennyson images man's last foe, Death, as

Walking all alone beneath a yew;

and we feel that the background for the fearful figure is well chosen. We believe, however, that Wordsworth originated this noble collocation of objects:

There is a yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,
Which to this day stands single, in the midst
Of its own darkness

. a pillared shade.
. beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs (as if for festal purpose, decked
With unrejoicing berries) ghostly shapes
May meet at noontide—Fear and trembling Hope;
Silence and Foresight; Death the skeleton,
And Time the shadow.

The *In Memoriam* contains a most striking portrait of the yew, in which its sullen colour and stiff hardihood are—for the first time, too, we believe—brought before the imagination. We give it as it stands on the threshold of this church-yard of sad thoughts, like the tree itself at the 'lych-gate'—

Old yew which graspest at the stones
That name the under-lying dead,
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again,
And bring the firstling to the flock,
And in the dusk of thee, the clock
Beats out the little lives of men.

O not for thee the glow, the bloom,
Who changest not in any gale,
Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom.

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
I seem to fall from out my blood,
And grow incorporate with thee.

Whilst we are on the subject of those denizens of the greenwood which have won an ill renown from mortals, let us not forget that which is the special bugbear of infancy. Ah! what distrusting damsel in the olden time ever feared the willow as little boys have the birch? Speak, Shenstone, of its horrors, and ye who have been children own the truthfulness of his sketch:

And all in sight doth rise a birchen-tree,
Which learning near her little dome did stow;
Whilom a twig of small regard to see,
Though now so wide its waving branches flow,
And work the simple vassals mickle woe.
For not a wind might curl the leaves that blew,
But their limbs shuddered and their pulse beat low;
And as they looked they found their horror grew,
And shaped it into rods, and tingled at the view.

A very Armida is this said birch, with her deceitful beauty and joyous airs. We never see her swinging 'her fragrant hair,' as Tennyson describes her, without thinking of Mephistopheles's description of Adam's first wife:—

Beware of her fair hair, for she excels
All women in the magic of her locks;
And when she winds them round a young man's neck,
She will not ever set him free again.

She ever was an instrument of pain, for Spenser tells us, 'the birch' was 'for shafts' in olden time as well as for rods; and yet, cruel as were and are her uses, she charms the eye above all her light fluttering sisterhood of aspens and alders. The resemblance of her boughs to waving curls must be strong, for all poets have apparently been struck by it. Wordsworth says:

From her unworthy seat, the cloudy stall
Of Time, breaks forth triumphant Memory;
Her glistening tresses bound, yet light and free
As golden locks of birch, that rise and fall
On gales that breathe too gently to recall
Aught of the fading year's inclemency.

And Tennyson, as before quoted—

The birch-tree swang her fragrant hair.

Wordsworth, whose all-observant eye noted every unconscious grace of nature, speaks of

Birch-trees risen in silver colonnades;

thus marking that especial charm which gives the birch its chief value in the eyes of a painter—that is, its undulating silvery stem, which affords such delicious contrast to the dull brown trunks of elm and oak.

And now, turning from lively to severe, let us honour the king of trees with the garland that poetry and world renown have given him.

Lord of the woods, the long-surviving oak,

Cowper calls him, and the picture-painting Spenser styles him—

The buidler oak, sole king of forests all.

All noble qualities seem typified and represented by this stately tree—age, strength, kingly majesty, endurance, patience, are, so to speak, the rings that girdle it.

Come, take a woodland walk with me,
And mark the rugged old oak-tree,
How steadily his arms he flings
Where from the bank the fresh rill springs,
And points the waters' silent way
Down the wild maze of reed and spray.

There stands he, in each time and tide
The new-born streamlet's guard and guide;
To him spring shower and summer sun,
Brown autumn, winter's sleet, are one.
But, firmest in the bleakest hour,
He holds his root in faith and power;
The splintered bark his girdle stern,
His robe gray moss and mountain-fern.

'The monarch oak,' says Dryden,

patriarch of trees,
Shoots rising up, and spreads by slow degrees;
Three centuries he grows, and three he stays
Supreme in state, and in three more decays.

But even after death the renowned oak-tree, like the immortalised humanity which he typifies, preserves a portion of his glory, gaining, in the reverence and poetic feeling attached to his years, all or more than he has lost in leafy honour and vigorous might.

Doubtless it was the skeleton of an oak that suggested to Drayton his noble image of trees—

So hacked above the ground,
That where their lofty tops the neighbouring countries
crowned,

Their trunks, like aged folk, now bare and naked stand,
As for revenge to heaven each held a withered hand.

Shelley, while describing 'a stubborn and unalterable will,' introduces a fine description of an oak in its period of decay and death:—

A giant oak, which heaven's fierce flame
Had scathed in the wilderness, to stand
A monument of fadeless ruin there;
Yet peacefully and movelessly it braves
The midnight conflict of the wintry storm;
As in the sunlight's calm it spreads
Its worn and withered arms on high,
To meet the quiet of a summer's noon.

From its prolonged existence, the oak becomes associated with the events of history, and stands from age to age a memento of man's deeds, sufferings, or successes. Thus the

Oak of Guernica, tree of holier power
Than that which in Dodona did enshrine
(So faith too fondly deemed) a voice divine—

has preserved for generations the memory of Biscayan liberty, which, under its venerable branches, Ferdinand and Isabella secured to the country. The oaks of Ellerslie and Torwood are rife with memories of the great champion of Scotland. Wallace played beneath the branches of the former, and, according to tradition, found a hiding-place there from the English soldiers; and the green foliage of Torwood oak sheltered his weary manhood, and was the rallying-point for his brethren in arms.

Howel Sele's Oak is the gaunt remembrancer of a deed of violence and bloodshed, for within its hollow bosom it concealed the body of him whose name it bears; becoming thus, as it were, an accomplice in Owen Glendower's crime, and partaking in the abhorrence due to an act which was rendered heinous by concealment. The Oak of Chertsey recalls a better memory of the Welsh hero: from it he viewed, with a chafed and angry spirit, Shrewsbury fight, and saw the lion crest of Hotspur go down in blood and glory.

Our own memorial tree of Roscobol—

Wherein the younger Charles abode
Till all the paths were dim,
And far below the Roundhead rode,
And hummed a surly hymn—

is too well known to name; and so is the oak about which

An old tale goes, that Herne the hunter,
Sometimes a keeper here in Windsor Forest,
Doth all the winter-time, at still midnight,
Walk round about an oak, with great ragged horns,
And there he blasts the tree.

But time and space would fail us if we strove to enumerate all the memorial trees from Abram's Oak at Mamre to the present time.

It seems idolatry with some excuse
When our forefather Druids in their oaks
Imagined sanctity—

so noble are they in life, so grand in death: Other trees lose all their beauty with their life, but when

The solid oaks forget their strength, and strew
Their latest leaf upon the mountains wide,

they still have a majesty of ruin about them which lends a charm to death.

But if the oak is death's fairest representative, the beech is surely the best image of the loveliness of life: so rounded, smooth, and silvery is its bark; so rich in light and shadow its bold projecting roots; so glossy and glittering its many twinkling leaves. Then it is a sociable tree—it likes to grow in groups; its graceful pendulous boughs appear as if they loved to shelter the bee and the bird beneath them; and so fine is the delicate tracery of the multitudinous tiny branches attached to its huge boughs, that even when leafless, it is a study for an artist, and, decked with the crystal brilliants of the hoar-frost, looks a very queen of trees. Virgil loved it, and placed Tityrus beneath a beechen-tree when singing the praises of Amaryllis. A fitter spot the poet could scarcely have found for his happy shepherd, to whom the blessings of home and peace were preserved amid the ruin and desolation of his country. White calls it 'the most lovely of forest-trees;' and Rogers thus sings of it, or rather gives it a voice to sing:

Thrice fifty summers have I stood
In beauteous leafy solitude,
Since childhood in my rustling bower
First spent its sweet and sportive hour;
Since youthful lovers in my shade
Their vows of truth and honour paid,
And on my trunk's smooth glossy frame
Carved many a long-forgotten name.
Oh! by the vows of gentle sound
First breathed upon this sacred ground—
By all that truth hath whispered here,
Or beauty heard with willing ear—
As love's own altar honour me:
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen-tree!

And Scott, who so well characterised trees by a single epithet, says:—

On the beech's pride and the oak's brown side
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

With great regard to the lover-like reputation of the beech—the tree on which affection has always carved beloved names—Tennyson, in his whimsical poem *Amphion*, talks of

Young ashes pirouetting down
Coquetting with young beeches:

trees admirably coupled, for there are those who have given the ash the preference over the beech, and even called it, with Gilpin, the 'Venus of the forest.' Spenser talks of the 'warlike beech,' in memory of the English bow, often formed from its tough wood.

But whilst dwelling on the beauty of these fair 'maidens of the greenwood,' we must not forget the 'wedded elm.'

Alone the woodbine droops and pines,
But round the elm with fondness twines,
With clasping tendrils seeks to rise,
And soon the stormy blast defies,
Till buds and spiry flowers are seen
Amid the broad elm's branches green;
And thus caressing and caressed,
The pair are in their union blessed.

The elm is a domestic, homely tree, so to speak. It dwells meekly beside our daily paths, living where other denizens of the wood disdain to grow—in ordinary meadows, in hedges, and on the borders of highways; and, though mutilated by the avarice which grudges every inch of available land, and will not abide its shadows, it still looks green and kindly—often the sole leafy ornament of some town suburb or overgrown village. Its beauty is considerably marred, however; and its stem, though strangely prolific of small green twigs, but ill supplies the place of the noble arms of which it has been robbed. Of all forest-trees, it is most to be found in our ordinary haunts, and has therefore

a great claim upon our affections: Wordsworth in several places designates it as 'joyful.'

A wide-spread elm

Stands in our valley, named the JOYFUL TREE,
From dateless usage which our peasants hold
Of giving welcome to the first of May
By dances round its trunk.

Sometimes these 'hedgerow elms,' as Milton calls them, share the village church-yard with the yew, as all readers of Gray's *Elegy* know well:

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

And often they are to be found in princely avenues, the home of the aristocratic rook or soft wood-pigeon.

The mountain-ash

No eye can overlook, when 'mid a grove
Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head,
Decked with autumnal berries, that outshine
Spring's richest blossoms; and ye may have marked,
By a brook-side or solitary tarn,
How she her station doth adorn; the pool
Glow as at her feet, and all the gloomy rocks
Are brightened round her.

Scott tells us, how

Clung the rowan to the rock,
And through the foliage shewed his head,
With narrow leaves and berries red.

This gay tree of autumn is as effective amid the russet brown and mellowing green of October, as the holy-berries at Christmas. Its luxuriant clusters cast a glow upon the woods, and deck them with coral-like pendants. It is a tree of good omen, and superstition has assigned it the reputation of uncharming spells and counteracting witchcraft. It was long believed that to sleep beneath its branches was to be safe from all ill spirits of the night. A superstition is also attached to the ordinary ash, as we learn from our delightful naturalist, Gilbert White: 'At the south corner of the Pleston or area near the church' (of Selborne), he says, 'there stood, about twenty years ago, a very old, grotesque, hollow pollard-ash, which for ages had been looked on with no small veneration, as a shrew-ash. Now, a shrew-ash is an ash whose twigs or branches, when gently applied to the limbs of cattle, will immediately relieve the pains which a beast suffers from the running of a shrew-mouse over the parts affected.* The shrew-ash was thus made:—into the body of the tree a deep hole was bored with an auger, and a poor devoted shrew-mouse was thrust in alive; and plugged in, no doubt, with several quaint invocations now forgotten.' This tree, he further informs us, was 'with reverential care preserved for years;' but that 'the late vicar stubbed and burnt it.' We are rejoiced that this hateful superstition is now forgotten, and the Venus of trees no longer likely to be transformed in old age into such a very Moloch for mice.

Like the mountain-ash, the pine decks the sides of lonely hills and otherwise desolate mountains, and has, of all trees, the most musical murmuring amid its trunk and branches. It is the Æolian harp of the forest. Who has not, when wandering at twilight in a pine-grove, listened in rapt silence to the many whispers stealing through its tall bare stems, and dying away in their leafy summits? It must have been a pine-grove that suggested to Beethoven the *Music amid Trees*, which is one of his sweetest waltzes. This music struck the sensitive ear of Shelley, as it does that of the homeward-bound clown:

The pine-boughs are singing
Old songs with new gladness.

* It was supposed that a shrew-mouse was of so baneful and deleterious a nature, that if it crept over a beast, the animal was afflicted with cruel anguish, and threatened with the loss of the use of its limbs.

Again he says, translating from Moschus:

When winds blow loud, pines make sweet melody.

And in another magnificent passage, descriptive also of their distorted and fantastic shapes, he writes thus:

We paused amid the pines that stood
The giants of the waste;
Tortured by storms to shapes as rude
As serpents interlaced.

And soothed by every azure breath
That under heaven is blown;
To harmonies and hues beneath,
As tender as its own.

Now all the tree-tops lay asleep,
Like green waves on the sea—
As still as in the silent deep
The ocean woods may be.

Their height of leafless trunk is thus described by Wordsworth:—

Pines on the coast, through mists their tops uprear,
That like to leaning masts of stranded ships appear.

And again—

Cloud-piercing pine-trees nod their troubled heads—
very descriptive of the effect of a strong breeze on the serried ranks of pines, which only rustle and make music out of light airs, or even ordinary winds; and when shaken, bend all together, with something of the sound and appearance of nodding plumes on many helmets. A very noble use is made of this motion in Milton's hymn:—

Wave your tops, ye pines;
With every plant in sign of worship wave—

uttering which lines the son of Burke expired.

Mounting heavenwards—crowning every mountain brow with perennial verdure, and carrying their mysterious music and strange sweet perfume far into climes that other trees ignore—pines have found eulogists amongst the poets of every people, and are as dear on Etna as on the mountains of the north:—

Aërial pines from loftiest steep ascend,
Nor stop but where creation seems to end.

How many beautiful creations of forest-life still remain unnoticed! It is quite bewildering to think of the long array of huge trunks, and tiny stems, and clustering branches which crowd 'another and yet another' upon our mental vision, like the long line of Banquo's offspring beneath the troubled gaze of Macbeth:

Oh, what a weight is in these shades! Ye leaves!
Your murmur erst so dear, when will it cease?

The confusion is as great as in Tennyson's *Amphion*, to which we have already alluded, and than which we know of nothing better or more graphic to close this paper:—

Whenever in a lonely grove
He [Amphion] set up his forlorn pipes,
The gouty oak began to move,
And flounder into hornpipes.

The mountain stirred its bushy crown,
And, as tradition teaches,
Young ashes pirouetted down,
Coquetting with young beeches.
And briony vine and ivy wreath
Ran forward to his rhyming,
And from the valleys underneath
Came little copses climbing.

The birch-tree swang her fragrant hair,
The bramble cast her berry,
The gin within the juniper
Began to make him merry.

The poplars, in long order due,
With cypress promenaded;
The shockhead willows, two and two,
By rivers galloped.
Came wet-shod alder from the wave,
Came yews a dismal coterie;
Each plucked his one foot from the grave,
Poussetting with a sloe-tree.

Old elms came breaking from the vine,
The vines streamed out to follow,
And, sweating rosin, plumped the pine
From many a cloudy hollow.

ALLIGATORS OF THE VALLEY OF THE AMAZON.

EXTRACTED FROM A PRIVATE LETTER.

At Villanova, we left the Amazon, and entered what are called the Parana mirés, extending into the country, where the greater part of the salt piracú is a very large fish weighing 70 pounds or more—is prepared. We expected to be occupied here some twelve days, instead of which thirty elapsed ere we got out of the upper mouth of the Parana miré dos Rios, a little below Serpa, but on the opposite shore. I mention this to introduce you to the alligators—called here 'jacarés.' Above Obidos, we began to fall in with these elegant creatures in considerable numbers, especially when we were anchored at night in the still bays. In the bright moonlight we could see them floating about in every direction, sometimes quite motionless on the surface, and only distinguishable from logs by careful inspection. The noise they make is a sort of grunt, such as a good-natured pig might make with his mouth shut, only rather louder. By imitating it, we drew them quite near us, and it is little they care for a musket-ball. We shot a young heedless fellow, however, one morning, as he was skulking under a dead trunk by the shore. When we got into the Parana mirés, and especially when we visited the piracú lakes, with which the country is interspersed, we saw jacarés lying about in them like great black stones or trunks of trees. It is amusing to observe what a perfectly good understanding seems to subsist between the jacarés and the fishermen, the former waiting very patiently for their share, which is the offal. When a large fish is hooked, the fishermen leap into the water, in the very midst of the jacarés, which merely sheer out of the way until their turn comes; and such a thing as a jacaré attacking a man is very rarely known.

That this, however, does occur now and then we saw fearful evidence. When we were placed near a sitio, a little below the upper mouth of the Rios, I learned that the 'Victoria' had been seen in a small lake near; and as I wished to trace the distribution of this plant in the Valley of the Amazon, I was anxious to verify the report, and likewise to procure specimens; but there was no montaria—as canoes hollowed out of a single trunk of a tree are called—and I was told I might probably borrow one at a sitio a little higher up. I accordingly proceeded to this sitio, and found there an old man and his three sons, men of middle age, with their children. Two of the sons had just come in from a distant fishing expedition, the third had his arm in a sling; and on inquiring the cause, I learned that, seven weeks ago, he and his father had been fishing in the very lake I wished to visit, and were embarked in a small montaria which remains constantly in the lake, the outlet of which is dried up in summer. They had reached the middle of the lake, and were looking out for fish with their bows and arrows, when, unseen by them, a large jacaré came under the montaria, gave it a jerk which sent them both into the water, and, seizing the son by the shoulder of the right arm, dived with him at once to the bottom, the lake being

about four fathoms deep. In this position of fearful peril, he had sufficient presence of mind to thrust the fingers of his left hand into the monster's eyes, and after rolling over three or four times, the jacaré let go his hold, and the poor fellow rose to the surface, though mangled, bleeding, and helpless. His father immediately swam to his assistance, and providentially the two reached the shore without being again attacked. I was shewn the wounds: every tooth had told; and some idea may be formed of this one terrible gripe, when I state that the wounds inflicted by it extended from the elbow to the shoulder, and downwards as far as the hip. All were now healed except one very bad one in the armpit, where one sinew at least was completely severed. Even this seemed to me in a fair way to heal soon; but although such should be the case, the deep scars and the useless arm—for it seems improbable that he will ever again be able to move his elbow or his shoulder—will remain to tell the tale to his dying day.

The sight of the wounded man was no encouragement to me to prosecute my enterprise; but I was very anxious to procure the fruit of the Victoria; and as three of the little fellows who were running about offered to row me over, and their grandfather made no objection, I did not hesitate to avail myself of their services. The mouth of the lake was on the opposite side of the Rios, and a little below the sitio. Having reached it, we entered a dense forest, following the dried bed of the igarapé, in which my guides were not slow to detect the recent footsteps of a jacaré. Five minutes brought us to the lake, and we embarked in the frail montaria, in which it was necessary before starting so to stow ourselves as to preserve an exact balance. We then coasted along towards the Victoria, which appeared at a distance of some 150 yards. We had made but a few strokes when we perceived by the muddy water ahead of us that a jacaré had just dived. As we passed cautiously over the troubled water, a large jacaré came to the surface a few yards from the offside of our montaria, and then swam along, parallel to our course, apparently watching our motions very closely. Although the little fellows were frightened at the proximity of the jacaré, their piscatorial instincts were so strong, that at sight of a passing shoal of fish, they threw down their paddles, and seized their mimic bows and arrows—the latter being merely strips of the leaf-stalk of a palm, with a few notches cut near the point—and one of them actually succeeded in piercing and securing an armadillo, of about eighteen inches long. Our scaly friend still stuck to us, and took no notice of our shouting and splashing in the water. At length, the eldest lad brought him of a large harpoon which was laid in the bottom of the montaria; he held this up and poised it in his hand, and the jacaré seemed at once to comprehend its use, for he retreated to the middle, and there remained stationary until we left the lake.

GENERATIONS.

A generation is usually admitted to occupy, on an average, a space of thirty-three years. Hence arise some facts which may be considered as rules in the history of human nature. A man, being likely to be a father at thirty-three, will probably be a grandfather at sixty-six. Many are, of course, fathers and grandfathers at earlier ages; but these are averages. When we see at any time a new-born babe, we may calculate pretty safely that the son of that babe, if he is to have one, will be approaching the close of life at a good age just about a century hence. We meet every day, in health and vigour, a gentleman whose father was born in 1720; but it is rare to find any man capable of business or social pleasure more than a hundred years after the birth of his father. In like manner,

any individual who finds himself (we shall say) this year at any particular stage of life, may be assured of it as a rule, that his great-grandfather was in just about the same stage of existence, and experiencing all its appropriate sensations, and aiming at much the same objects, in the year 1753—that is, a hundred years ago. Does he see his son at a particular stage of life? then his own grandfather was at the same stage as that son a century ago; and so on. There are occasional exceptions of a surprising kind: for instance, Charles James Fox, who died in 1806 at the age of fifty-seven, had an uncle who was paymaster of the forces in 1679, the year of the battle of Bothwell Bridge, and his grandfather was on the scaffold with Charles I. But the rule is as stated. During any particular decade, as the *forties*, the *fifties*, &c., look into the obituary and you will find that the old people then dying—of the class who, being best off, live longest—are for the most part the produce of the *eighteenth* decade antecedent. Thus, for example, the individuals born in the *seventies* in the last century are the people who are now closing their natural pilgrimage in the ripeness of their days. It has become rare to see an announcement of the death of a person born in the *sixties*: one in the *fifties* only occurs now and then. Thus, overlooking the many premature deaths, the obituary is like an index always coming down nearer and nearer to our natal decade. Those whose births took place in the *eighties* must soon be on the outlook for the arrival of the fatal finger at their point in mortuary chronology. In a few more years, the men of the *nineties* will be in course; and so it goes on. Let us see to improve the hours, and not be taken unprepared.

OSSIANIC SURNAMES.

A curious paper on this subject appears in a valuable and well-designed quarterly periodical, entitled the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, lately started by a few gentlemen of Belfast, and in which many such curious subjects are treated. We find that, as usual, many of the surnames of the Celtic population of Ireland are derived from what are now called Christian names, the prefix Mac or O being generally added to express son or grandson, though sometimes the full syllable Mac is not preserved in pronunciation. Thus Mr M'Grady, the author of the paper in question, considers Ossian's own name as the origin of the surnames Cushin and Cousins (perhaps we should add the Scotch name Cushnie); the original being M'Ossian, but this being changed or softened by the dismissal of the M. Finn, the name of Ossian's father, signifying *fair-haired*, is the origin of the surname O'Finn in Ireland (and probably of the Scotch name Phin). Finn's father was Comhal, pronounced *Cowal* or *Cool*, and this not only appears in Cowell, but is considered as identical with Howell and Hoole; names which, in Wales, here become Powell and Poole by the addition of *P*, meaning son. Oscar, again, the son of Ossian, may be looked to as the origin of the M'Cuskers, a well-known Irish family. Three of Finn's companions-in-arms are cited by Mr M'Grady as bearing appellations which are commemorated in the existing Irish surnames, Goll M'Morn, for instance, being in his opinion the origin of the M'Gills, while Conan is the founder of the Cannings. Of course, the existence of the names in these modern forms is, to a certain degree, a proof of the existence of Ossian and his heroes, though leaving room for debate as to their characters, deeds, and even the period in which they flourished.

NEW MUSEUM OPENED IN PARIS.

The newspapers mention that, a short time ago, the public were admitted to visit the Musée des Souverains, which has been recently formed at the Louvre. It occupies five rooms at the back of the Colonnade of the Louvre, two of which formerly formed part of the Spanish museum. The first room contains different suits and parts of suits of

royal armour worn by Francis II., Henry II., Henry IV., Louis XIII., and Louis XIV. The second room also contains royal armour, among which is a suit worn by Francis I. The third room contains a chapel of reception of the Order of the Holy Ghost, with the mantles worn by the knights, and other brilliantly ornamented articles connected with the order. The next room, called the Salle des Bourbons, contains numerous articles which belonged to the kings of France from Childeric and Dagobert. Among other things are a series of books used in religious service, which belonged to Louis XIV., Henry IV., Marie Stuart, Henry II., and other monarchs; a Bible, presented in 850 by the monks of the abbey of St Martin of Tours to Charles the Bald, and since preserved in the church of Metz; a French Bible of Charles V., with the signatures of that monarch, his brother, Jean de Berry, of Henry III., Henry IV., and Louis XIII. and XIV.; the psalter of St Louis, given by Queen Jeanne to her husband, Charles V., and by King Charles VI. to his daughter, Marie of France; a prayer-book of Charles the Bald, the cover being in silver, inlaid with precious stones, and with a basso-relievo in ivory; an Evangilaire of Charlemagne, executed in 780, &c. In the same room is the marriage-sword of Henry IV., the musket of Louis XIII., the sword of Henry II., the carbine of Louis XIII., and the sword of Francis I., bearing on the hilt the motto, *Fecit potentiam in brachio suo*. This sword was brought from Madrid by Murat. There is also in the same salle the crown, sword, and saddle which were used at the coronation of Louis XVI.; the helmet and buckler of Charles IX.; the mirror and candlestick presented to Marie de Medicis by the republic of Venice; different insignia discovered in the tomb of Childeric; and other objects of equal curiosity. In the centre of the room stands the fauteuil of King Dagobert, and the sedan-chair used by Louis XV. There is also in the room a casket, given by Richelieu to Anne of Austria, which as a work of art is the finest article in the whole collection. Near the windows are placed objects of more recent date: among them are a writing-desk in white wood, used by Louis XVIII. while in England; a jewel-box, which belonged to Queen Marie Antoinette; and the writing-desk of Louis-Philippe, just as it was left in 1848. The fifth room, called the Salle de l'Empereur, only contains articles which belonged to Napoleon, among which are the full-dress clothes worn by him on occasions of ceremony; his saddle, sword, gloves, &c.; his uniform-coat, which he wore at the battle of Marengo; his sword of First Consul, his horse's bridle-bit, the hat he wore in the campaign of 1814, and the small round hat which he wore at St Helena, as well as the pocket-handkerchief which he used when on his death-bed. The Austrian uniform of the Duke de Reichstadt, a locket containing the hair of Napoleon and of his son, and a flag given by the Emperor to the 1st regiment of the Imperial Guard, are also to be there. This flag, which is the one kissed by Napoleon when he bade adieu at Fontainebleau, has since that period until now remained in the possession of General Petit.

A MODERATE MAN.

Dr George Fordyce contended, that as one meal a day was enough for a lion, it ought to suffice for a man. Accordingly, for more than twenty years, the doctor used to eat only a dinner in the whole course of the day. This solitary meal he took regularly at four o'clock, at Dolly's Chop-house. A pound and a half of rump-steak, half a broiled chicken, a plate of fish, a bottle of port, a quarter of a pint of brandy, and a tankard of strong ale, satisfied the doctor's moderate wants till four o'clock next day, and regularly engaged one hour and a half of his time. Dinner over, he returned to his home in Essex Street, Strand, to deliver his six o'clock lecture on anatomy and chemistry.—*Salad for the Solitary.*

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